late to the change in the Organisational set-up of the Central Social Welfare Board, revision/strengthening of the programmes of the Central Social Welfare Board, delegation of administrative and financial powers to the State Boards, registration of State Boards as subsidiary units of the Central Social Welfare Board, bearing of all administrative expenses of the State Boards by the Central Social Welfare Board etc. The recommendations of the Committee have been noted and action, wherever feasible, initiated.

Salary of Anganwadi workers

92. SHRI ASHOK NATH VERMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to revise the salary of Anganwadi workers;

(b) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to make a provision for uniform salary for the Anganwadi women workers all over the country; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (PROF. M. G. K. MENON): (a) to (c) Anganwadi Workers are voluntary, part time, honorary workers under the Centrally-sponsored Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme. They are paid an honorarium. The rates of honorarium prescribed are uniform for the entire country. Expenditure on such honorarium is borne by the Government of India.

At present, there is no proposal to revise the honorarium of Anganwadi Workers.

Enquiry into defence deals

93. SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to institute enquiries into the various defence deals concluded during the last five years, specially with a view to finding out payment of illegal commissions if any; if so, by when; and

(b) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) and (b) In such cases where unauthorised payments come to light will need to be inquired into.

Damage to forests

94. SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the damage being caused to forests by the traditional practice of carrying head loads of timber or wood for fuel or for other use;

(b) if so, what is the estimated damage caused by this practice per year; and

(c) what steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken to prevent this kind of damage to our forest wealth?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Fuelwood head loads are one of the main source of domestic energy in the villages. The people extract firewood as traditional or prescriptive privileges of rights. This extraction has now increased beyond the carrying capacity due to increased population. Excessive extraction of timber as head loads is not noticed.

(b) No systematic survey has been carried out at the National level to assess the damage to the forests because of wood extraction through head loads.

(c) The new National Forest Policy has suggested a massive need based and time bound programme of afforestation with particular emphasis on fuelwood and fodder production. The Policy has also stressed that the holders of customary rights and conces-